

## Message Text

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60

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SCCT-01 SAM-01 EUR-12 (ISO) W

----- 042128

R 270038Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1738

INFEERUMJKL/AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR 5616

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, SN

SUBJ: STUDENT ISSUE CONTINUES TO SIMMER

REFS: (A) SINGAPORE 5053; (B) SINGAPORE 5014

1. ALTHOUGH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS HAVE NOT DEMONSTRATED DURING THE HOLIDAYS, THE STUDENT ISSUE CONTINUES TO BUBBLE FITFULLY. IN SPEECH ON DECEMBER 20, FOREIGN MINISTER RAJARATNAM RATHER EXTRAVAGANTLY WARNED THAT "WE WILL STARVE TO DEATH AND SINGAPORE WILL PERISH" IF STUDENTS CONTINUE TO RUN AROUND SHOUTING SLOGANS AND BOYCOTTING CLASSES. IT WAS PERHAPS SUGGESTIVE OF RAJA'S FEELINGS TOWARD THE STUDENTS THAT HE CHOSE TO DELIVER HIS SPEECH AT A LOCAL KINDERGARTEN GRADUATION CEREMONY.

2. THREE OF THE MALAYSIAN STUDENTS EXPELLED FROM SINGAPORE HAVE BEEN RELEASED FROM POLICE DETENTION IN JOHORE BARU. THEY SIGNED AN OPEN LETTER TO THE SINGAPORE STUDENT UNION (USSU) SAYING THAT THEY HAD BEEN ARRESTED BY THE MALAYSIAN SPECIAL BRANCH UNDER THE INTERNAL SECURITY ACT ON THE DAY THEY WERE EXPELLED FROM SINGAPORE AND KEPT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR NINE DAYS IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT. THEY SAID THAT JULIET CHIN,

THE FORMER PRESIDENT OF USSU AND ONE OF THE SIX TO BE EXPELLED, WAS STILL IN SOLITARY. SUBSEQUENTLY, A DELEGATION FROM THE USSU CALLED ON THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSION TO FIND OUT WHY JULIET CHIN WAS STILL IN DETENTION. THEY WERE GIVEN NO SATISFACTION AND TOLD TO COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH KUALA LUMPUR.

3. ON DECEMBER 20, ABOUT 20 PRIVATE POLICE GUARDS ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS DISMANTLED AND REMOVED THE "STUDENTS' SOLIDARITY MONUMENT". THE USSU ATTACKED THIS ACTION AS HIGHLY PROVOCATIVE AND SAID THAT THE UNION WOULD CONTINUE TO ACT PEACEFULLY.

4. ON DECEMBER 24, STRAITS TIMES GAVE HEAVY FRONT-PAGE PUBLICITY TO THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS REPLY TO THE USSU LETTER OF DECEMBER 17. THE USSU LETTER HAD REGISTERED STRONG PROTEST AGAINST THE "INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT AND DEPORTATION OF OUR STUDENTS"; DEMANDED THAT THE EXPELLED STUDENTS BE REINSTATED; MAINTAINED THAT THE SIX WERE ONLY TRYING TO CHANNEL THEIR ENERGIES ON BEHALF OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND THE POOR AND DENIED THAT THE SIX HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. THE LETTER ALSO COMPLAINED ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY DEPARTMENT IN SPYING ON, INTIMIDATING AND HARASSING STUDENTS.

5. MINISTER CHUA'S REPLY COMPLETELY REJECTED THE USSU'S STATEMENT THAT THE STUDENTS WERE NOT MEDDLING IN POLITICS, AND CITED AT LENGTH VARIOUS EXCERPTS FROM STUDENT PUBLICATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS FROM THE ASIAN STUDENTS' SEMINAR IN HONG KONG SUPPORTED BY A SINGAPORE STUDENT DELEGATION TO PROVE HIS POINT. CHUA'S CONCLUSION WAS THAT THE STUDENT UNION OFFICIALS HAD AGITATED TO CONVERT THE CAMPUS INTO A SANCTUARY WHERE STUDENT POLITICAL POWER COULD BE BUILT UP IMMUNE FROM GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION OR FROM THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION. TEXT OF LETTERS BY POUCH.

6. COMMENT. IN VIEW OF MOST OBSERVERS, MOST STUDENTS UPON RETURNING TO CAMPUS AFTER THE HOLIDAYS WILL DEVOTE THEIR EFFORTS TO PREPARING FOR EXAMINATIONS AND WILL AVOID BECOMING INVOLVED IN FURTHER DEMONSTRATIONS. A SMALL HARD-CORE OF ACTIVISTS MAY CONTINUE TO PRESS THEIR CAUSE. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT IF THE PRESIDENT OF THE USSU, TAN WAH PIOW, IS FOUND GUILTY OF CRIMINAL TRESPASS AND RIOTING AND RECEIVES A HEAVY SENTENCE THAT THERE COULD STILL BE FURTHER SIG-  
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NIFICANT AGITATION. GRANT

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, BOYCOTTS, ARRESTS  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** MorefiRH  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
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**Review Date:** 10 JUL 2002  
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**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Subject:** STUDENT ISSUE CONTINUES TO SIMMER  
**TAGS:** PINS, SN, USSU, (CHIN, JULIET)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005